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REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 11, and 15-20 are amended herein. No new matter is added by these amendments.

Claims 1-6, 9-12, and 14-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5, 760,917 to Sheridan. Claims 7-8 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Sheridan in view of Official Notice.

The present invention as recited in independent claim 1 is directed to an information distribution device to which a plurality of terminal devices and a content server are connected via a network. Independent claim 11 is directed to a terminal device connected to a content server via a network.

The information distribution device access the distribution information stored in the content server based on access information and transmits the accessed distribution to other terminal devices belonging to a group according to distribution destination information as well as one terminal device belonging to the group. Where the one terminal device transmits the access information and the distribution destination information to the information distribution device.

As a result of this configuration, when information to be shared is distributed or transmitted to terminal devices belonging to a group, one terminal requests distribution of the information from the information distribution device, and then the distribution information that is stored in the content server is distributed to the terminal devices of the group including the one terminal device, so that sharing of the information is enabled without an information-sharing partner being burdened by either additional and complicated procedures to obtain the shared information.

In contrast, the Sheridan reference, as best understood, teaches an image distribution

method and system in which one terminal registers photo image data in a hub station to which a plurality of terminals are connected. The hub station provides a terminal with an interface listing access rights by which a terminal specifies other terminals which can access the photo image data. Then, the hub station sends information to the specified other terminals so that the other terminals can access the photo image data stored in the hub station. Thus it is submitted that Sheridan fails to teach or suggest an information distribution device which accesses a content server to receive distribution information there from. Indeed, according to Sheridan, the other terminals are still required to perform procedures for accessing in order to obtain photo images data registered in the hub station.

Accordingly, it is submitted that independent claims 1 and 11 as currently amended patentably distinguish over the relied upon portions of Sheridan and are allowable. Claims 15-20 recite similar features and are amended in a similar fashion to claims 1 and 11 respectively, accordingly, it is submitted that these claims are also allowable. Claims 2-10 and 12-14 depend from claims 1 and 11 respectively and are allowable therewith.

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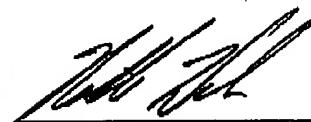
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Conclusion

In view of the remarks set forth above, this application is in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,



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